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Britton and Brown Illustrated Flora of the
Northeastern United States and Adjacent
Canada, Vol. 2, page 409, Copyright 1952,
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AMORPHA CANESCENS LEAD PLANT

Lead Plant is a shrub with erect or ascending, simple or sparingly branched stems that are 0.3-0.8 m high. In marginal sites, it may die back to near the base each year. The alternate leaves have a short petiole and 27-41 narrowly elliptic leaflets that are 8-15 mm long. Foliage is covered with very dense, short white hairs, giving the plant a hoary appearance. The violet flowers are borne in dense spike-like inflorescences that are 7-15 cm long atop long stems originating from the leaf axils. Each flower has a single petal ca. 2 mm long that is longer than the densely hairy calyx, with 10 orange stamens exserted beyond the petal. The glandular and hairy fruits are ca. 4 mm long and egg-shaped with a long beak. Flowering in late June-mid July; fruiting through summer.

Lead Plant could be confused with members of the genus *DALEA* or *PSORALEA*, but differs from these genera in being woody, and in having flowers with only 1 petal.